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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 001353

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PBTS](#) [PHUM](#) [KWBG](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: BIL'IN: SEVEN PALESTINIANS ARRESTED IN LATEST IDF  
RAID

REF: JERUSALEM 691

Classified By: DPO Greg Marchese, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. The IDF raided several homes in the Palestinian village of Bil'in in the early hours of August 3, arresting two adolescents and five adults. Six have been charged with stone-throwing and damage to public property, and one with incitement. NGO contacts maintain that the August 3 raid - the latest in a series of nighttime IDF raids into Bil'in - reflects an escalation of IDF efforts to intimidate Bil'in residents and halt the weekly anti-barrier demonstrations that have taken place in Bil'in since 2005. End Summary.

Seven Bil'in Residents  
Arrested in Latest Raid  
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¶2. (C) According to Israeli NGO contacts, the IDF raided several homes in the Palestinian village of Bil'in in the early hours of August 3. These NGO sources alleged that the raid was in response to weekly demonstrations held to protest the security barrier, which restricts locals' access to their agricultural land. Sarit Michaeli, Communications Director for NGO B'Tselem, said that five adults and two 16-year-old youths were arrested during the raid. Lymor Goldstein, an attorney with the law office representing detained residents of Bil'in, told PolOff August 5 that none of the seven arrested on August 3 have been released.

¶3. (C) Goldstein added that one of those arrested was Mohammed Khatib, a prominent activist and member of the Bil'in Popular Committee. Israeli authorities reportedly charged him with incitement; the remaining six have been charged with stone-throwing and damage to public property. Goldstein said that lawyers have requested that all seven be released on bail. He added that Adib Abu Rahme, another member of the Bil'in Popular Committee, was arrested several weeks ago and remains in detention.

Israeli Police Extract Testimony  
from Bil'in Youth Held in Custody  
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¶4. (C) Michaeli, Goldstein, and Kobi Snitz (a member of "Friends of Bil'in") told PolOffs separately on August 4 and 5 that the Israeli police have previously extracted incriminating testimony from local youths to facilitate the arrests of Bil'in activists. According to Goldstein, Israeli police detain youths from Bil'in, pressure them into providing the names of individuals who organize weekly anti-barrier demonstrations, and use this information as

"corroborated testimony" to enable the arrests of peaceful activists. Michaeli expressed concern that some youths may have been mistreated while in custody.

#### Lawyers Prevented from Speaking to Clients Following August 3 Arrests

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15. (C) Goldstein told PolOff that he and his colleagues were not allowed to meet with the seven individuals arrested August 3 prior to their interrogation by Israeli police. Goldstein said the Israeli police told him the interrogations were held at a Shin Bet interrogation center, and that the lawyers were not permitted to enter the Shin Bet facility.

#### Escalation of Raids to Intimidate Bil'in Residents

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16. (C) The August 3 raid is the latest in a series of nighttime IDF raids into Bil'in in recent weeks. According to Michaeli, these raids have resulted in the arrest of 25 Bil'in residents since June 29, 19 of whom remain in custody. Michaeli claimed that the IDF is trying to "break down" weekly anti-barrier demonstrations in Bil'in, citing the IDF's targeting of demonstration organizers. According to Goldstein, the IDF is "terrorizing the whole population of Bil'in. The whole point of these arrests is intimidation."

WALLES